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U.S. likely to authorize COVID booster shots

By ZEKE MILLER and MATTHEW PERRONE

WASHINGTON (AP) — After struggling for months to persuade Americans to get the COVID-19 vaccine, U.S. health officials could soon face a fresh challenge: talking vaccinated people into getting booster shots to gain longer-lasting protection as the delta variant sends infections soaring again.

As early as Wednesday, U.S. health authorities are expected to recommend an extra dose of the vaccine for all Americans eight months after they get their second shot, according to two people who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity to discuss internal deliberations.

That means the biggest vaccination drive in U.S. history is about to get even more extensive.

Continued on next page



A man gets a COVID-19 vaccine at a mass vaccination site at the Natick Mall on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 2021, in Natick, Mass. Associated Press



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Continued from Front

The move is being driven by both the highly contagious variant and preliminary evidence that the vaccine's protective effect starts dropping within months.

Last week, U.S. health officials recommended boosters for some people with weakened immune systems, such as cancer patients and organ transplant recipients. If the shots are expanded as expected to other Americans, among the first to receive them could be health care workers, nursing home residents and other older people.

Some experts have expressed concern that a new campaign calling for boosters could muddle the public health message and undercut the continuing drive to win over the tens of millions of Americans who are hesitant to get their first COVID-19 shots.

Calling for third doses could discourage people who had been skeptical of the shot's effectiveness in the first place, Lawrence Gostin, a public health specialist at Georgetown University, warned on Tuesday. "We have to really make sure that while we're spending a lot of time and effort on third doses that we don't undermine our campaign for first vaccinations," he said. "That's truly the existential crisis in the United States."

The booster campaign could also cause ill will toward the United States: Global health officials, including the World Health Organization, have called on wealthier nations to hold off on booster shots to ensure poor countries have enough vaccine for the initial doses.

Dr. Tlaleng Mofokeng, a South African expert advising the United Nations, condemned the move toward booster shots in the U.S., saying it will have the



A pharmacy technician loads a syringe with Pfizer's COVID-19 vaccine, Tuesday, March 2, 2021, at a mass vaccination site at the Portland Expo in Portland, Maine.

Associated Press

effect of "advancing and deepening the existing inequities" when "there are people who are yet to receive a single shot."

But White House press secretary Jen Psaki said the question of whether to distribute boosters or help other nations "is a false choice. We can do both."

She said the U.S. is "far and away" the biggest contributor to the global fight against COVID-19 and will "continue to be the arsenal for vaccines" to the world.

"We also have enough supply, and we have long planned for enough supply, should a booster be needed for the eligible population," Psaki said.

Booster shots would only begin to be administered widely once the U.S. Food and Drug Administration formally approves the vaccines, which are being dispensed for now under what

is known as emergency use authorization. Full approval of the Pfizer shot is expected in the coming weeks.

More than 198 million Americans have received at least one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine, or 70% of those who are eligible, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Just under 60% of Americans 12 and older are fully vaccinated.

The vaccination drive has been slower than the Biden administration had hoped for. At the same time, the variant is spreading aggressively through unvaccinated communities and also causing an increasing number of "breakthrough infections" of fully inoculated people.

Studies show the vaccine remains highly protective against severe COVID-19, but results from Israel released last month suggest

its effect wanes. Its effectiveness against symptomatic infection peaked at 96% two months after study participants got their second dose. By six months, it was down to about 84%.

Israel, which exclusively administered the Pfizer shot, has been offering a booster to people over 50 to control its delta surge. Researchers are still trying to understand to what extent the breakthrough infections are due to waning immunity or vulnerability to the delta variant.

The new urgency from U.S. officials reflects how quickly the variant has knocked the country back on its heels. On July Fourth, President Joe Biden proclaimed that the nation was declaring its independence from the virus. But since then, infections, hospitalizations and deaths have increased nationwide, over-

loading emergency rooms across parts of the South and West.

On Monday, Pfizer and its partner BioNTech submitted data to the FDA to support authorizing a booster shot for the general public. Pfizer said a small study showed people who received a third dose had higher levels of antibodies against several versions of the coronavirus, including the delta variant. The company is working on a larger study.

Dr. William Moss of Johns Hopkins University said more data is needed on whether waning antibody levels lead to hospitalizations and deaths. The antibody research alone is "insufficient to call for booster doses for the general population."

And Dr. Carlos del Rio, a professor at Emory University's medical school, said: "Our hospitals are not full of people who were vaccinated six or eight months ago. Our hospitals are full of the unvaccinated."

Americans who received the earliest doses of Pfizer's vaccine — mainly health care workers and nursing home residents — are approaching the eight-month mark from when they received their second dose.

"There is a concern that the vaccine may start to wane in its effectiveness," the director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Francis Collins, said over the weekend. "And delta is a nasty one for us to try to deal with. The combination of those two means we may need boosters."

The Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are administered in two doses. Officials are continuing to collect information as well about the one-shot Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which was only approved in the U.S. in late February, to determine when to recommend boosters. □

U.S. agencies scrub websites to protect Afghans left behind

By **MATTHEW LEE, ASHRAF KHALIL and GARY FIELDS**
WASHINGTON (AP) — Multiple federal agencies that operated in Afghanistan and worked with Afghan citizens have been hastily purging their websites, removing articles and photos that could endanger the Afghan civilians who interacted with them and now fear retribution from the Taliban.

The online scrubbing campaign appeared to begin late last week when it became clear that the Afghan security forces had completely collapsed and the Taliban would take over the country far faster than even the most alarmist official predictions. The concern is that the Taliban or its supporters would search the websites and identify Afghans who had worked with the Americans or merely benefited from their services.

State Department Spokesman Ned Price said the department was advising personnel to search for and remove social media and website content featuring civilians because the safety of Afghan contacts "is of utmost importance" to the government. "State Department policy is to only remove content in exceptional situations like this one. In doing so, department personnel are following records retention requirements," Price said. The U.S. Agency for International Development said in a statement the agencies who operated in Afghanistan began clearing the websites last Friday — one day after the decision was made to send U.S. military to secure the Kabul airport as the capital collapsed.

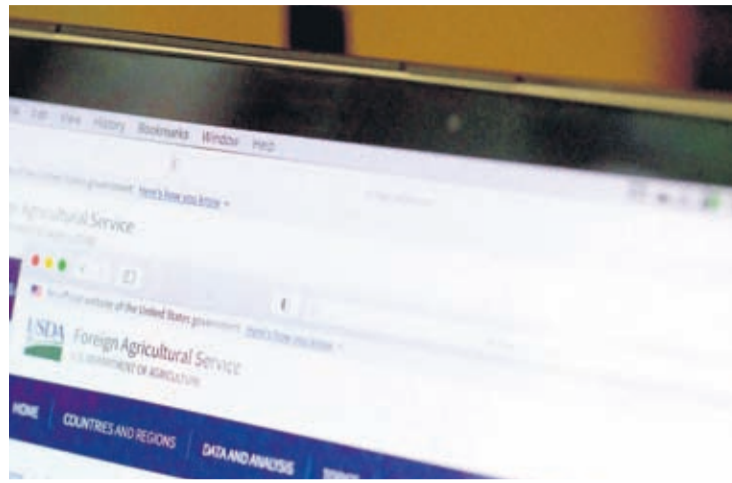
"Given the security situation in Afghanistan, and out of an abundance of caution for the safety of our staff, partners, and beneficiaries, we are reviewing USAID public websites and social media to archive content that could pose a risk to certain individuals and groups," the agency said in an email to The Associated Press.

An official with the Agriculture Department said a similar scrubbing effort was underway there. That official spoke on condition of anonymity because they are not cleared to speak on the issue. An Associated Press review of the USDA website revealed at least seven different links to Afghanistan-related press releases or blog posts that, when clicked on, defaulted to a page declaring "Access denied: You are not authorized to access this page." While much attention has focused on protecting Afghan interpreters and others who worked with the U.S. military, soldiers were only a portion of the U.S. personnel who operated in Afghanistan over the last two decades.

Organizations, including USAID, elements of the Agriculture Department and others, began arriving in Afghanistan as early as 2002, within months of the toppling of the previous Taliban government, focused on developing the country's infrastructure, educational and agriculture sectors. As recently as June, USAID announced the U.S. was providing more than \$266 million in additional humanitarian assistance to help Afghans. Total humanitarian assistance for Afghanistan totaled more than \$543 million since fiscal year 2020, according to the USAID press announcement. The money brought the total U.S. humanitarian assistance to nearly \$3.9 billion since 2002, the release said. In some of the now-disabled Agriculture Department posts viewed by The Associated Press, several, but not all, contained details that would clearly be viewed by the Taliban as proof of collaboration, such as names and photos of Afghan agricultural specialists and governmental officials who visited the U.S. on multiple USDA-sponsored delegations or fellowships. Others were more innocuous, such as an article about Minnesota farmers donating more than 2,500

bushels of soybean seeds to their Afghan counterparts. The fact that they have also been scrubbed from the site possibly indicates the level of caution being used — or simply that whole sections of Afghan-related material were hastily deleted in large batches. One scrubbed article makes it clear that even

while the American military was deployed across the country, Afghan civilians and government officials were in danger of retaliation for the most low-level associations with the U.S. government. It recounts in detail the USDA's working relationship with the members of an regional agricultural authority in a province near Kabul. USDA helped coordinate a shura (townhall meeting) between the council members and local farmers. The article, which includes a photo of the meeting, notes more than 250 farmers showed up despite insurgent threats of "violence against any farmer or government official planning to attend the meeting or work with USDA." □



A computer screen displays a United States Department of Agriculture website page with the words "Access Denied" on it Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021, in Washington.

Associated Press

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Wet and unwelcome, Fred spawns twisters and flooding in U.S.

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Tropical Storm Fred weakened to a depression and spawned several apparent tornadoes in Georgia and North Carolina on Tuesday as it dumped heavy rains into the Appalachian mountains along a path that could cause flash floods as far north as up-state New York. One death was reported — a Las Vegas man whose car hydroplaned near Panama City, Florida, Monday night and overturned into a water-filled ditch, the Florida Highway Patrol said. Fewer than 30,000 customers were without power in Florida and Georgia after the storm crashed ashore late Monday afternoon near Cape San Blas in the Florida Panhandle. Emergency crews were repairing downed power lines and clearing toppled trees in Fred's aftermath. Some schools and colleges in Florida, Alabama and Georgia cancelled Tuesday's in-person classes due to the storm. The National Hurricane Center said Fred had top sustained winds of 35 mph (56 kph) as it crossed south-



A car attempts to drive through flood waters near Peachtree Creek near Atlanta, as Tropical Storm Fred makes its way through north and central Georgia on Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

east Alabama into western and north Georgia. Senior hurricane specialist Stacy Stewart said Tuesday that it could dump 5 to 7 inches (13-18 centimeters) of rain into parts of Alabama, Georgia and the Carolinas — and possibly up to 10 inches (25 centimeters) of rain in isolated spots, causing flash flooding in moun-

tainous areas. Clay Chaney, a meteorologist with National Weather Service, said a local fire chief in North Carolina told the agency a tornado was on the ground in northern Iredell County around 12:47 p.m. The weather service was also looking into reports of a tornado hitting Alexander County.

Parts of western North Carolina, already soaked by rain not directly associated with Fred, braced for more rainfall through early Wednesday. Transylvania County, south of Asheville, declared a state of emergency after 10 inches (25 centimeters) fell Monday, causing landslides, flooding roads and destroying at

least one home. Transylvania County Chairman Jason Chappell, a lifelong resident, said it was the most intense flooding he's seen in at least 20 years, and that he fears more damage to come. Floodwaters swamped a local factory Monday with several inches of water and damaged its parking lot. "It really caught everyone off guard," Chappell said. "No one was forecasting that amount of rain." The North Carolina Department of Transportation said two of three westbound lanes of Interstate 40 in Haywood County, west of Asheville, were closed Tuesday afternoon due to a rockslide triggered as the rain blew through. With Fred blowing in Tuesday, National Weather Service meteorologist Ashley Pratt said Haywood, Transylvania and Jackson counties are likely to get the most rain, including another 6 to 8 inches (15 to 20 centimeters) in Transylvania. One of the region's major attractions, Grandfather Mountain State Park, closed on Monday. □

Historic American church set to integrate its slavery ties



In this Nov. 7, 2018 file photograph, the Old North Church stands behind a statue of Paul Revere in the North End neighborhood of Boston.

Associated Press

By MARK PRATT
Associated Press

The great contradiction of Boston's Old North Church is that a site pivotal to the freedom of the nation is the same place where slave owners and traders once

worshiped. Now, with a \$75,000 grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities announced Tuesday, the foundation responsible for the preservation of the church campus and the

visitor experience plans to overhaul its educational programming to better reconcile and integrate those ties to slavery. The grant is one of \$28.4 million in grants for about 240 projects nationwide. "We'll be able to address what I call the paradox of the Old North Church," said Nikki Stewart, executive director of the Old North Foundation, which is distinct from the active Episcopal congregation that still uses the site for religious services. "People see us as a symbol of liberty and independence, but the reality is that the church benefitted from the enslavement of Africans." For example, the famous steeple was financed in part by the sale of logwood, the harvesting of which was dependent on slave labor, she said.

The church, built in 1723, is known to generations of schoolchildren as the place where in 1775 two lanterns in the steeple signaled that the British were heading to Concord and Lexington "by sea" and set Paul Revere on the ride that ignited the American Revolution. The links to slavery have always been known, but just how strong those ties were came to light several years ago after the foundation started a program to highlight the connections of several congregants to the Colonial chocolate-making trade. One of those chocolatiers, it turned out, was Newark Jackson, who was also a sea captain and smuggler who trafficked in slaves. "That was really a punch in the gut to our whole organization," Stewart said. Further research found that

Jackson was killed during a mutiny aboard a ship in 1743 that at the time was transporting 15 slaves, 13 of whom were children. Like most cultural organizations, the Old North Foundation suffered greatly during the pandemic. The church welcomed about 150,000 visitors in 2019. It shut down completely for a while, and Stewart estimates that current visitation is still only about half what it was. The grant will help change the educational experience in three ways: through the narratives the staff tells to visitors; through updated exhibits and interpretive signage; and through new online and digital programming designed for children. "It is our hope that through this plan that all Americans will be able to see their stories in the Old North Church," Stewart said. □

U.N. nuclear watchdog: Iran producing more uranium metal

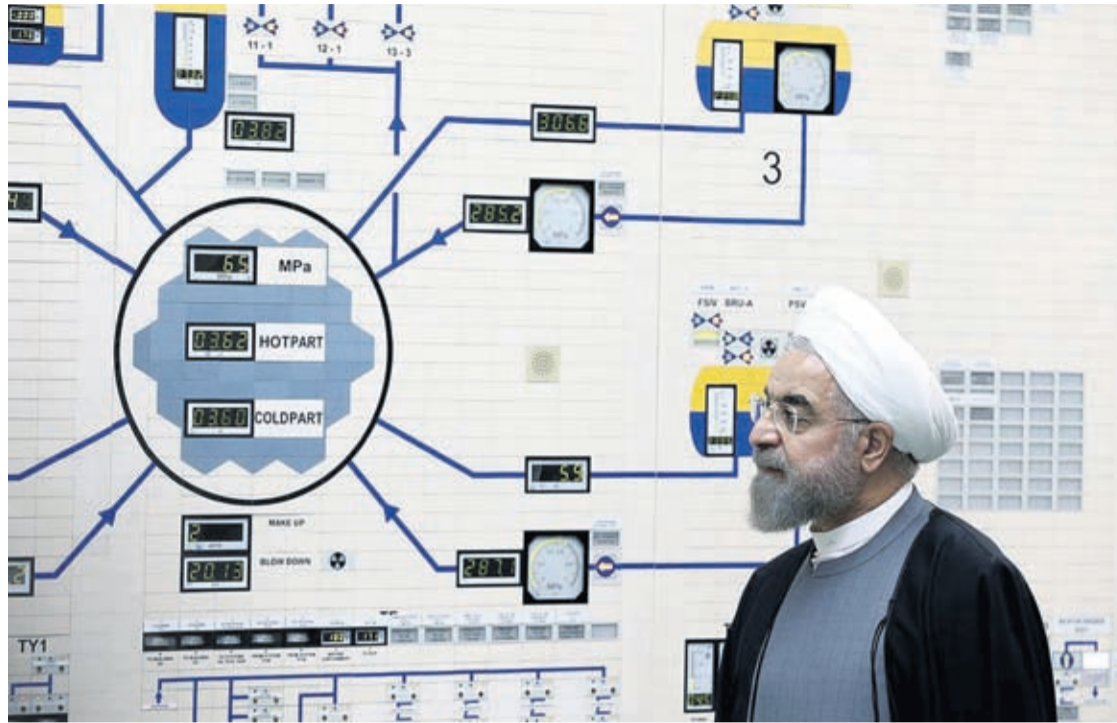
By DAVID RISING

BANGKOK (AP) — Iran continues to produce uranium metal, which can be used in the production of a nuclear bomb, the United Nation's atomic watchdog confirmed Tuesday, in a move that further complicates the possibility of reviving a landmark 2015 deal with world powers on the Iranian nuclear program.

In a report issued by the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna to member nations, Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi said that his inspectors had confirmed on Saturday that Iran had now produced 200 grams of uranium metal enriched up to 20%.

Grossi had previously reported in February that his inspectors had confirmed that a small amount of uranium metal, 3.6 grams, had been produced at Iran's Isfahan plant.

The production of uranium metal is prohibited by the 2015 nuclear deal known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA, which promises Iran economic incentives



In this Jan. 13, 2015, file photo released by the Iranian President's Office, President Hassan Rouhani visits the Bushehr nuclear power plant just outside of Bushehr, Iran.

Associated Press

in exchange for limits on its nuclear program, and is meant to prevent Tehran from developing a nuclear bomb.

Iran insists it is not interested in developing a bomb, and that the uranium metal is for its civilian nuclear program.

The European members of

the JCPOA earlier this year voiced "grave concern" over the production of uranium metal, however, saying Iran has no credible civilian need for it and that it is a "key step in the development of a nuclear weapon."

The U.S. unilaterally pulled out of the nuclear deal in

2018, with then-President Donald Trump saying it needed to be renegotiated.

Since then, Tehran has been steadily increasing its violations of the deal to put pressure on the other signatories to provide more incentives to Iran to offset crippling American sanc-

tions re-imposed after the U.S. pullout.

The western Europeans, as well as Russia and China, have been working to try to preserve the accord.

President Joe Biden has said he is open to rejoining the pact, but that Iran needs to return to its restrictions, while Iran has insisted that the U.S. must drop all sanctions.

Months of talks have been held in Vienna with the remaining parties of the JCPOA shuttling between delegations from Iran and the U.S.

The last round of talks ended in June with no date set for their resumption.

Following the latest IAEA report on the increase in uranium metal production, U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price said the move was "unconstructive and inconsistent with a return to mutual compliance."

"Iran has no credible need to produce uranium metal, which has direct relevance to nuclear weapons development," he said in a statement. □

Air raid sirens sound in Israel after rocket fired from Gaza

JERUSALEM (AP) — Air raid sirens sounded in southern Israel on Monday after a rocket was fired from the Gaza Strip, the first since the 11-day war between Israel and Palestinian militants in May.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for the rocket fire. It came hours after Israeli troops clashed with Palestinian gunmen during a late-night arrest raid in the occupied West Bank, killing four Palestinians in one of the deadliest battles in the area in years.

The Israeli military said in a statement that it identified one rocket launch that was intercepted by aerial defense batteries. Amateur video footage appeared to show the rocket being intercepted over the southern town of Sderot.

The rocket fire could jeopardize three months of relative calm since Israel and

the militant group Hamas, which rules the Gaza Strip struck a cease-fire.

In the clashes earlier, fighting erupted in Jenin, a city in the northern West Bank where tensions have been high since a man was killed in fighting with Israel earlier this month.

Israel's paramilitary border police said its forces were attempting to arrest a suspect when they "came under heavy fire from close range" by a number of gunmen. It said Israeli forces returned fire, and none of its officers were injured.

The official Palestinian news agency, WAFA, said four men were killed by Israeli fire and a fifth was seriously wounded. Amateur footage from the scene appeared to show an intense exchange of gunfire in the streets of Jenin.

Senior Palestinian official Hussein Al Sheikh accused Israel of "a heinous crime"

and tweeted that "the international community should be ashamed of its silence about this and its failure to provide protection to the Palestinian people from this oppression." During the second Palestinian uprising in the early 2000s, Jenin experienced some of the heaviest fighting with Israel, though the area has generally been quiet in recent years. According to the Israeli military, there have been at least eight clashes between troops and Palestinian gunmen over the past two months.

The West Bank has experienced an uptick in deadly violence in recent months, with over two dozen Palestinians killed by Israeli fire in recent weeks, including children and Palestinian protesters. Israel's war in May in the Gaza Strip, driven by friction in at a contest Jerusalem holy site and attempts by a settler



Israeli soldiers play chess at their position near the Israel-Gaza border, Monday, Aug. 16, 2021.

Associated Press

group to evict Palestinians in east Jerusalem, and the recent establishment of a West Bank settlement outpost have contributed to the tensions.

Last week, Israel's military chief urged troops to follow professional regulations and "act with discretion" in light of the complexity of the situation.

Israel captured the West Bank in the 1967 Mideast war and in the decades since has established dozens of settlements where nearly 500,000 settlers reside. The Palestinians seek the West Bank as part of their future state and view the settlements as a major obstacle to resolving the conflict. □

China blames U.S. over Afghanistan, but says will work with it

BEIJING (AP) — China has expressed a willingness to hold talks with the U.S. to promote a "soft landing" in Afghanistan, while heavily criticizing Washington and again demanding that the Biden administration halt its attacks on China.

Foreign Minister Wang Yi, in a phone call Monday with U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, blamed what he called America's "hasty" military withdrawal the chaos accompanying the Taliban's seizure of power in Afghanistan, according to a Foreign Ministry statement dated Tuesday.

"China is willing to conduct communication and dialogue with the U.S. to promote the soft landing of the Afghan issue and avoid a new civil war or humanitarian disaster ... and not let it become a breeding ground and shelter for terrorism once again," Wang was quoted as saying in the call.

Ahead of the final withdrawal of U.S. troops, the Taliban have topped the Afghan military and government, entering the capital, Kabul over the weekend.

Wang said that China and



In this July 28, 2021, file photo released by China's Xinhua News Agency, Taliban co-founder Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, left, and Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi pose for a photo during their meeting in Tianjin, China.

Associated Press

the U.S. should cooperate on global issues and regional hot spots, but that "the US cannot, on the one hand, deliberately curb and suppress China to damage China's legitimate rights and interests, and on the other hand, count on China to offer support and coordination."

A one-sentence State De-

partment statement said that Blinken and Wang spoke about developments in Afghanistan including the security situation and respective efforts to bring their citizens to safety.

The Biden administration has been seeking China's cooperation on issues such as climate change, while criticizing China over differ-

ences on trade and technology, security in the Asia-Pacific region and human rights.

Henry Storey, a political risk analyst based in Melbourne, Australia, said that Wang is trying to portray China as a responsible international stakeholder in contrast to America's history of intervention in other

countries.

"The reference to the U.S.'s 'hasty withdrawal' and Afghanistan being a 'breeding ground and shelter for terrorism' alludes to China's clear anxieties around how instability in Afghanistan may impact China and the broader region," Storey said in an email response to questions.

Wang and Blinken also each held talks separately with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on Monday.

Wang called for strengthened strategic cooperation and coordination with Russia to encourage the Taliban to adopt mild and prudent religious policies and build an open and inclusive political structure with all parties, a Chinese Foreign Ministry statement said. China has shown a willingness to engage with the Taliban, inviting leaders to a meeting with Wang in the Chinese city of Tianjin last month.

Wang urged the group to negotiate a peaceful end to the two decade-old conflict and not shelter terrorists it says threaten security in its restive northwestern region of Xinjiang. □

Hong Kong leader: Groups crossing 'red lines' should disband



Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam listens to reporters' questions during a press conference in Hong Kong, Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

HONG KONG (AP) — Hong Kong's leader Carrie Lam said Tuesday organizations that cross "red lines" and disregard national security should disband and the government would not hesitate to cut ties with pro-

fessional groups that turn political.

Authorities are conducting an ongoing crackdown on dissent in the city, arresting pro-democracy leaders and activists as Beijing seeks to keep Hong Kong

in line after months of mass anti-government protests in 2019.

Lam made her comments after the Civil Human Rights Front, known for organizing annual July 1 protests and a key organizer of some of the biggest protests in 2019, said Sunday it could no longer operate due to the imprisonment of its leader Figo Chan and a loss of members.

Its dissolution also came as Hong Kong police were reportedly investigating the group for breaking the law, with a police commissioner saying in an interview with local media that the group had not formally registered with the government.

Critics of Hong Kong's security legislation say it rolls back freedoms promised to Hong Kong for 50 years when it was handed over

by the British to mainland China in 1997. The legislation criminalizes subversion, secession, terrorism and foreign collusion, and has been used to arrest over 100 pro-democracy figures since it was implemented last June.

"There is no absolute freedom of an individual anywhere in the world. You enjoy it in accordance with the law," Lam said at a regular news conference, adding that there were many organizations who do not accept that their behavior and speech are regulated by the city's national security law imposed last June.

"In the past we have seen organizations and individuals crossing these red lines. In my opinion, the only choice is at this time is disbandment," she said. "So it's

nothing to do with exercising your right or your freedom."

Lam said that even if organizations disband of their own volition, it does not absolve them of criminal liability if they are found to break the law. Law enforcement agencies will continue to collect evidence and investigate, and any breaches of the law will be prosecuted accordingly, she said.

Professional groups who deviate from their original purpose and turn political will also be cut off from the Hong Kong government, she said.

The government last month severed ties with the Professional Teachers' Union, the city's largest union for educators. The union later disbanded, citing a changing political climate. □



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Tropical storm feeds growing anger in quake-stricken Haiti

By **MARK STEVENSON and EVENS SANON**

Associated Press

LES CAYES, Haiti (AP) —

Heavy rain from Tropical Storm Grace forced a temporary halt Tuesday to the Haitian government's response to the deadly weekend earthquake, feeding the growing anger and frustration among thousands who were left homeless.

Grace battered southwestern Haiti, which was hit hardest by Saturday's quake, and officials warned some areas could get 15 inches (38 centimeters) of rain before the storm moved on. Intermittent rain fell in the earthquake-damaged city of Les Cayes and in the capital of Port-au-Prince.

The storm hit late Monday, the same day that Haiti's Civil Protection Agency raised the death toll from the earthquake to 1,419 and the number of injured to 6,000, many of whom have had to wait for medical help lying outside in wilting heat.

Patience was running out in the Western Hemisphere's poorest nation. Haitians already were struggling with the coronavirus, gang violence, worsening poverty and the July 7 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse when the quake hit.

Bodies continued to be pulled from the rubble, and the smell of death hung heavily over a pancaked, three-story apartment building. A simple bed sheet covered the body of a 3-year-old girl that firefighters had found an hour earlier.

Neighbor Joseph Boyer, 53, said he knew the girl's family.

"The mother and father are in the hospital, but all three kids died," he said. The bodies of the other two siblings

were found earlier.

Illustrating the lack of government presence, volunteer firefighters from the nearby city of Cap-Hatien had left the body out in the rain because police have to be present before it could be taken away.

Another neighbor, James Luxama, 24, repeated a popular rumor at many disaster scenes, saying that someone was sending text messages for help from inside the rubble. But Luxama had not personally seen or received such a message.

A throng of angry, shouting men gathered in front of the collapsed building, a sign that patience was running out for people who have waited days for help from the government.

"The photographers come through, the press, but we have no tarps for our roofs," said one man, who refused to give his name. The head of Haiti's office of civil protection Jerry Chandler acknowledged the situation. Earthquake assessments had to be paused because of the heavy rain, "and people are getting aggressive," Chandler said Tuesday.

Some children were orphaned in the quake and some youngsters were starting to go hungry, said Carl-Henry Petit-Frère, a field manager for Save the Children, which said in a statement that it was distributing what it could to people living on the streets without protection from the wind and rain.

"I see children crying on the street, people asking us for food, but we are low on food ourselves as well," Petit-Frère said, adding that children were warned not to go into houses because they could collapse. "The organizations that are here are doing what they can,



Earthquake-displaced people are exposed to the elements the morning after Tropical Storm Grace swept over Les Cayes, Haiti, Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021, three days after a 7.2-magnitude earthquake.

Associated Press

but we need more supplies. Food, clean water and shelter are needed most, and we need them fast."

About 20 soldiers finally showed up to help rescuers at the collapsed apartment building.

The lack of adequate aid was made more apparent by the fact that the only help that arrived was from poorly equipped volunteers.

"All we have are sledgehammers and hands. That's the plan," said Canadian volunteer Randy Lodder, director of the Adoration Christian School in Haiti.

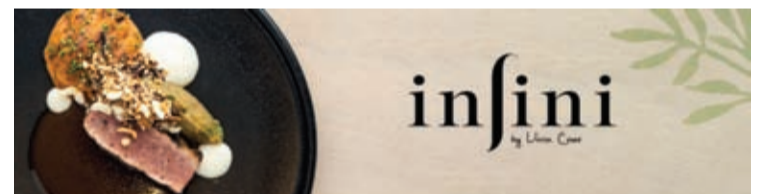
Sarah Charles, assistant administrator for the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, said its disaster response teams were forced to suspend operations as the storm arrived Monday, but members were back Tuesday to assess its impact and continue helping.

"We do not anticipate that the death toll related to this earthquake will be anywhere near the 2010 earthquake, where more than 200,000 people were killed," Charles told reporters.

we're seeing on the ground right now."

In a statement, the U.S. military's Southern Command said it was moving eight helicopters from Honduras to Haiti and that seven U.S. Coast Guard cutters were en route to support the USAID team. Two cutters already are there along with two Coast Guard helicopters and U.S. Navy P-8 Poseidon aircraft that are taking aerial images of earthquake devastated areas, the statement said.

The effort was being mounted "to provide the kind of emergency response that is necessary in a human tragedy and catastrophe like this," U.S. national security adviser Jake Sullivan told reporters at the White House. □



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A camera and a happy photographer



ORANJESTAD — The cover picture of the Aruba Today Facebook page shows a picture of a different local photographer every couple of months. We just love culture and would like to support our local talents, therefore Aruba Today chooses to be a platform for showcasing art.

The newest cover picture is the work of the local resident Michael Arends. Before him we had the honor to showcase the art of photographers Michael-Anthony, Anuar Habibe, Armando Goedgedrag, Jonathan Petit and Jeroen Lucas from Aruba Paradise Photos and Julien de Bats alias One Happy Photographer.

Michael Arends, born and raised in Aruba in the city of Savaneta, is a very lovely gentleman who has a great love for nature, culture and everything that is related to his beloved island of Aruba. As a good 'Savanetero' he enjoys swimming in the ocean. A while ago he encountered some health issues and in order to help him he decided to go for a swim every day. Amazed by the greatness and beauty that lies beneath the water he decided to take his camera with him and capture every moment while snorkeling. Photography has become his hobby. He uploads all his pictures on his facebook page, that way everyone is able to enjoy these beauties. He usually goes to Mangel Halto, tres trapi and many other areas where he takes extraordinary pictures. Michael also has a very special 'turtle' friend who loves taking pictures with him. Mr. Turtle just can't get enough of the camera.

Take a look at Michael's facebook page and feel free to chat with him. Facebook page: Michael Arends. □



PALM BEACH — A true once-in-a-lifetime experience is coming up. The stage: an Aruban *cunucu* house creating a magical ambiance. The play: *The Chef's Garden*; a 6-course culinary voyage and French-Asian gastronomic ecstasy by Dutch top chef Martijn Liebrechts on Wednesdays. You will leave this culinary Garden of Eden in an enchanted state creating a memory that will last a lifetime. Be sure to reserve this opportunity before others do. This production is presented to you by Papillon Restaurant.

Sometimes combining the best of the best is a matter of all things falling into place. Every Wednesday from 7pm you are welcomed to enter a world where food is a passion. Papillon Restaurant presents their guest chef Liebrechts- who will be on the island for a limited

Papillon Restaurant presents: Chef's Garden, culinary magic by European top chef in a romantic garden

time period - and with The Chef's Garden menu being a fresh concept on the island, we're sure you will fall completely in love with this.

A bit about Martijn

Liebrechts is the perfect example of when career and passion come together. He earned his spurs at Amber, one of the best French fine dining restaurants Hong Kong has to offer, with 2 Michelin-stars and ranked as the 24th best restaurant in the world. Amber has been the place where he got inspired by the use of Asian ingredients prepared in a classical French way which is still the base of his nowadays cooking style. Moving back to Amsterdam, The Netherlands, he joined the team of former Bib Gourmand restaurant "Wilde Zwijnen", which was awarded the title "The New Dutch Cuisine" by the New York Times. He has been there and done it all around the world.

The menu is carefully done with local products, fresh and perfectly matched with a selection of wines by local sommeliers. Diet op-

tions are available; please inform them when you make your reservation.

The Secret Garden & Papillon

This is an in-home dining experience where you will feel you are part of an exclusive setting. Private culinary events are the owner's specialty and their lush, tropical garden is also inviting for you to relax and indulge in hours of authentic culinarian delights, a heaven to foodies. For more than a decade, Papillon restaurant has built a reputation with the fusion of classic French cuisine, Dutch and Caribbean flavors. They know how to thrill and in collaboration with The Secret Garden we can only expect phenomenal.

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United Dogs Aruba canceled massive sterilization program in Aruba due to new COVID-19 outbreak

ORANJESTAD – The United Dogs Aruba Foundation postpones until further notice the massive sterilization program for cats and dogs programmed to take place in October and November.

The foundation responsible for this program informed the government of its decision after consulting the medical team that deemed it necessary to postpone the campaign.

Reasons

One of the reasons to cancel the campaign is the increase in COVID-19 cases with two new variants, which resulted in many positive cases. They explained that their responsibility is the safeguard the safety of their volunteers, however now that guarantee is not possible. In addition, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration decided to stop all export



licenses for controlled medicine, with an intent to halt as much as possible, travel to the U.S.A.

New date?

The United Dogs Aruba Foundation will evaluate internally in mid-December, on the new date, and will inform the Aruba authorities accordingly. Meanwhile, they are considering another way to reach their goal. They already have some ideas and will share these subsequently. □

PUBLIC ALERT: The Department of Public Health wants to warn the public on a dangerous practice

ORANJESTAD - The Department of Public Health (DVG) recently noticed an advertisement that offers to sell the COVID-19 vaccine in Aruba.

DVG issues a warning to the community not to fall into this trap. This practice is dangerous for your health and also will lead to you losing your money.

As DVG informed on numerous occasions, it is necessary to keep vaccines at a set temperature to guarantee their efficacy. If one buys a vaccine from anyone or anywhere, it does not warrant its safety

or efficacy. Furthermore, if one buys a fake or manipulated vaccine, which was not handled according to the protocol for it not to lose its efficacy, it also does not warrant its safety or efficacy.

This dangerous practice is already prevalent in countries with a scarcity of the vaccine. People steal vaccine ampoules (bottles) or seek used ampoules with some remaining vaccine and add it to the content of other ampoules. They also fill the ampoules with water of any other liquid and sell it as a vaccine. People engaging in this



practice do it only for money and have no regard for the scammed victims.

The DVG already put the Inspectorate of Public Health (IVA) on notice regarding this dangerous practice. They also informed other departments to put an immediate stop to this situation before someone gets hurt. □

Aruba to me

ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received an amazing story from Amy Laggis from Naugatuck, CT. She wrote:

"Aruba to me.... is a spectacular island with peaceful morning walks on Eagle Beach (and reading my FAVORITE newspaper!), warm sun-soaked afternoons, and amazing sunsets you won't see anywhere else! From snorkeling in clear blue waters to enjoying international fare throughout the island it can't be beat!

We have enjoyed coming to Aruba for the past 10 years and we won't be stopping anytime soon!"



Today's Happening



A selection of where to go while in Aruba

Thursday 19

Art Expression at Paseo Herencia Mall

- Art lovers, we've got you covered. Take a trip to Paseo Herencia Mall and enjoy the creativity, inspiration and the love for Art spread all around. Visit the Aruba Art Gallery where artists now have the ability to showcase their art pieces in this Artist Community Gallery, accessible to both locals and tourists. It's a new way to reconnect with other artists and community.
- From 5 PM – 10 PM
- Located at Paseo Herencia Mall. Entrance next to Starbucks & Maggy's
- Facebook: Aruba Artist Gallery



Monday 23

Local Arts & Craft Fair at Elements Restaurant

- Immerse in local culture and savor the music, art, and flavors of the island at this wonderful local arts & craft fair at Elements Restaurant. Have a truly local experience every Monday with an authentic Aruban dinner and Aruban arts. Find the perfect locally-made gift for yourself or your loved ones.
- Starts at 5 PM
- Bucuti & Tara Beach Resort
- Facebook: Elements Restaurant Aruba



Friday 20

Summer Impressions menu at Infini Aruba

- Enjoy an unforgettable dining experience at their chef's table, where an extensive 8 course Chef's Impression will be prepared right before your eyes. You can also opt for a carefully curated wine pairing. Indulge in never seen before creations and never tasted before combinations. All in an evening's worth of culinary magic.
- Starts at 6:30 PM
- Located at Blue Residence (J.E. Irausquin Blvd 266, Palm Beach)
- For reservations go to www.infiniaruba.com/reservation
- Facebook: Infini Aruba



Tuesday 24

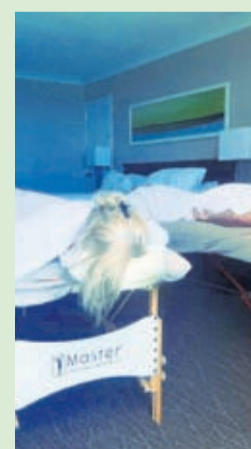
Keep calm and let the Taxi driver handle it

- You are here and now let your personal driver take it over. Take a ride in a relaxed mode, safe environment and with an amicable driver. Available for any pick up either it is for breakfast, lunch, dinner, shopping or an island tour.
- Available daily upon request
- For reservations call/Whatsapp Enrike at +297-593-1420
- Facebook Page: Taxi Time Aruba

Saturday 21

Saturday Box Special at Bits & Cheeses by Deli297

- Enjoy a tasteful experience in a cozy and peaceful atmosphere. Bits & Cheeses offers a great variety of the best specialty Cheeses, Charcuterie, Butter & Wines. On Saturday's ask for the 'Box for 2' with 3 types of cheese & charcuterie with additives such as fruits, nuts and crackers. Can't pick up? They can deliver for a small fee.
- Available Saturday 5 PM-10 PM
- Pre order via whatsapp at (+297)5665264
- Located at Wilhelminastraat 63, downtown Oranjestad, (across El Gaucho restaurant)
- Facebook: Bits&Cheeses by Deli297



Sunday 22

Hands of Gold Massage & Beauty on wheels

- After a very busy week all you need now is to pamper yourself with a relaxing massage or a skin care & body treatment at the comfort of your own room. Mary of Hands of Gold Massage is ready to give you that much needed treatment you deserve. Discover the secret of relaxation.
- Available daily from 9 AM- 7 PM
- For reservations call/Whatsapp Mary at +297-733-5034
- Instagram page: [handsofgoldmassage&beauty](https://www.instagram.com/handsofgoldmassage&beauty)
- Facebook: Holiday Inn Beach Resort Aruba



Wednesday 25

Chef Ruben Dario Hernandez- Your Personal Chef

- Sit down, relax and let Chef Ruben do the cooking. Chef Ruben has a passion for food and you will feel all the love in every dish he prepares. Breakfast, lunch or dinner, your wish is his command. For any occasion, wedding, anniversary, birthday, family or corporate gathering or just a home dinner chef Ruben is at your service.
- Available upon request
- For reservations call +297 566-4882
- Facebook: ChefRubendh

Millennial Money: 3 things to do before you buy crypto

By SARA RATHNER of Nerd-Wallet

Investing in cryptocurrency can be as easy as a few taps on your phone, and with crypto all over the news and coming up in conversations with friends, it's tempting to dive right in. However, depending on your financial situation and appetite for investing risk, crypto might not be an appropriate investment for you right now — or ever.

"I am the biggest crypto hippie you'll talk to in a very long time," says Tyrone Ross, CEO of Onramp Invest, a cryptoasset platform for registered investment advisors. And yet, he cautions against it. "I don't think the general public should be investing in crypto."

Picture your finances as an ice cream sundae, with crypto as the cherry on top. It makes up a small proportion of the overall sundae, and not everyone wants one. And before you fish that cherry out of the jar, you need to assemble the rest of your dessert. In non-ice-cream terms, that means creating a strong financial foundation and learning everything you can about crypto before you put any real money in.

1. PUT FINANCIAL SAFE-



In this Feb. 9, 2021 file photo, the Bitcoin logo appears on the display screen of a crypto currency ATM at the Smoker's Choice store in Salem, N.H.

Associated Press

GUARDS IN PLACE

First and foremost, you need to prepare for those times when things don't go as planned.

Over the past year, workers who lost income because of the pandemic had to tap into savings, take on debt or enter into hardship programs to afford their bills. This time has been a stark reminder of the importance of having an emergency fund.

"When you're young, you can feel like Superman or Superwoman, but when the bubble happens, you could easily be out of a job for nine to 12 months," says Theresa Morrison, a financial planner in Tucson, Arizona. "Don't underestimate systemic shocks to the market."

Morrison recommends saving up six months of living expenses if you're single, or around three months if

you share expenses with a working spouse or partner. But stashing away even a few hundred dollars can be helpful when you're faced with an unexpected expense. And if you have any high-interest debt, like credit card debt, paying this down can further strengthen your financial position.

Review your insurance coverage, too, because these policies can provide much-

needed money during difficult times. Life insurance can be especially important if you have dependents.

2. SAVE AND INVEST FOR FUTURE PLANS

Once you have money set aside for emergencies, begin thinking about your short-, medium- and long-term financial goals. Retirement is, of course, a big thing to save for, so contribute to retirement accounts (especially if you have access to a plan with an employer match). But set specific savings goals for other major life steps.

"Most people want to travel every year, buy a house in 10 years, get married in 10 years. These things cost money," Morrison says. "Put down how much it'll cost in today's terms and figure out how much to save out of your paycheck every month. From my experience, that alone can be \$1,000 a month."

3. GET EDUCATED ABOUT CRYPTOCURRENCY

You've got the money and you're ready to jump on the crypto bandwagon, only you have no idea how someone even buys crypto. Or how it will fit into your overall financial plan. Or if it's too risky for you. □

Buffett's firm ups Kroger stake while trimming drug holdings

By JOSH FUNK
AP Business Writer

OMAHA, Neb. (AP) — Billionaire Warren Buffett's company has again increased the size of its bet on grocery giant Kroger, while scaling back several of its health care industry investments.

Berkshire Hathaway Inc. said in a quarterly update with regulators Monday that it picked up nearly 11 million shares of Kroger stock during the second quarter, raising its holdings to 61.8 million shares. Buffett's company has been steadily adding to its Kroger holdings in recent quarters.

Berkshire also sold off its 643,022 shares of biotechnology firm Biogen and cut

its investments in drugmakers Merck, Abbvie Inc. and Bristol-Myers Squibb Co. At the same time, Berkshire reported a new 1.6 million share stake in Merck spinoff Organon & Co. During the quarter, Berkshire also sold its nearly 14 million shares of paint maker Axalta Coating Systems to eliminate that holding. Many investors follow the company's investments closely because of Buffett's remarkably successful track record.

Berkshire officials, however, don't generally comment on these quarterly filings. And the quarterly filing doesn't make clear which investments Buffett made. The billionaire handles the biggest in-

vestments in Berkshire's portfolio, such as Apple, Coca-Cola and Bank of America. He has said that investments of less than \$1 billion are likely to be the work of Berkshire's two other investment managers. Berkshire also reduced its stake in automaker General Motors by 7 million shares to 60 million shares. And it trimmed its holdings in oil producer Chevron, professional services firm Marsh & McLennan, US Bancorp and media company Liberty Global.

The biggest investments in Berkshire's portfolio, Apple and Bank of America, remained unchanged during the second quarter. Besides investments, the Omaha, Nebraska-based



In this May 5, 2019, file photo Warren Buffett, Chairman and CEO of Berkshire Hathaway, smiles as he plays bridge following the annual Berkshire Hathaway shareholders meeting in Omaha, Neb.

Associated Press

Berkshire owns more than 90 companies outright, including BNSF railroad, Geico insurance and several major utilities. The

conglomerate also owns manufacturing, furniture, shoe, jewelry, chocolate, underwear and brick companies. □

CROSSWORD

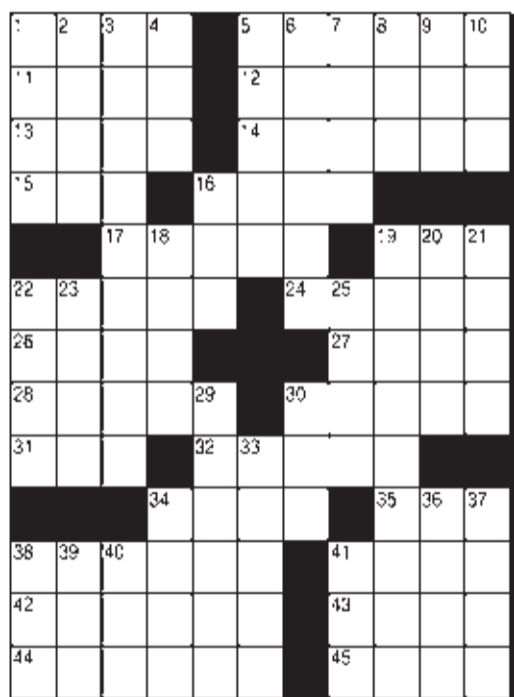
By **THOMAS JOSEPH**

- ACROSS** 42 1960s
 1 Hyphen's cartoon kin
 5 Drum kit parts
 11 Canyon sound
 12 Maine national park
 13 Potential prince
 14 Fit in
 15 Evergreen shrub
 16 Wickedness
 17 Musical set in Argentina
 19 Storage spot
 22 Be of one mind
 24 Likely
 26 Clock part
 27 "Beetle Bailey" dog
 28 Warning sound
 30 John of music
 31 Cardi B specialty
 32 Even a little
 34 Smell
 35 First woman
 38 James of "127 Hours"
 41 Litmus reddener



Yesterday's answer

- DOWN**
 1 Stand up to
 2 Land unit
 3 Hotel amenity
 4 Sty resident
 5 Custom
 6 Pole feature
 7 Robust
 8 Bother
 9 Pewter component
 10 Decline
 16 Compete
 18 Turn suddenly
 19 Top for pop
 20 A fan of
 21 Noble gas
 22 Miles off
 23 Charity event
 25 Bakery buy
 29 Zany
 30 Stirrup setting
 33 Horn sounds
 34 Formerly
 36 Despicable
 37 Blissful place
 38 Army bases: Abbr.
 39 Join the crew
 40 King Kong, e.g.
 41 In the past



8-18

AXYDLBAXR
 is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

8-18

CRYPTOQUOTE

RY YZJDW QT VTFXSTFRWD YT
 MRUD XDTXND YPDRS SRMPYW
 ... RY YZJDW QT FTQDH YT
 SDWXDVY YPD RQARURACZN.
 — PZSUDH FRNJ

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: WHERE PEOPLE HAVE NO DREAMS AND NO HOPES AND ASPIRATIONS, LIFE BECOMES DULL AND A MEANINGLESS WILDERNESS. — TOMMY DOUGLAS

Global sizzling: July was hottest month on record, NOAA says



In this Monday, July 26, 2021, file photo, cows graze as smoke rises from the Dixie Fire burning in Lassen National Forest, near Jonesville, Calif.

Associated Press

By **SETH BORENSTEIN**

Earth sizzled in July and became the hottest month in 142 years of recordkeeping, U.S. weather officials announced.

As extreme heat waves struck parts of the United States and Europe, the globe averaged 62.07 degrees (16.73 degrees Celsius) last month, beating out the previous record set in July 2016 and tied again in 2019 and 2020, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration said Friday. The margin was just .02 degrees (.01 Celsius). The last seven Julys, from 2015 to 2021, have been the hottest seven Julys on record, said NOAA climatologist Ahira Sanchez-Lugo. Last month was 1.67 degrees (0.93 degrees Celsius) warmer than the 20th century average for the month.

"In this case first place is the worst place to be," NOAA Administrator Rick Spinrad said in a press release. "This new record adds to the disturbing and disruptive path that climate change has set for the globe." "This is climate change," said Pennsylvania State University climate scientist Michael Mann. "It is an exclamation mark on a summer of unprecedented heat, drought, wildfires and flooding."

Earlier this week, a prestigious United Nations science panel warned of worsening climate change

on record.

One factor helping the world bake this summer is a natural weather cycle called the Arctic Oscillation, sort of a cousin to El Nino, which in its positive phase is associated with more warming, the NOAA climatologist said.

Even with a scorching July and a nasty June, this year so far is only the sixth warmest on record. That's mostly because 2021 started cooler than recent years due to a La Nina cooling of the central Pacific that often reduces the global temperature average, Sanchez-Lugo said.

"One month by itself does not say much, but that this was a La Nina year and we still had the warmest temperatures on record ... fits with the pattern of what we have been seeing for most of the last decade now," said University of Illinois meteorology professor Donald Wuebbles.

While the world set a record in July, the United States only tied for its 13th hottest July on record. Even though California, Nevada, Oregon and Washington had their hottest Julys, slightly cooler than normal months in Texas, Oklahoma, Kansas, Arkansas, Missouri, Alabama, Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire kept the nation from approaching record heat levels. □

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Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
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Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

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Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

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American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

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Tel. 736 2952

Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989

Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional
Tel. 583 5400

Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888

Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433

Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

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Phone Directory Tel. 118



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Adam Driver on singing, surrealism and 'Annette'

By **JAKE COYLE**

AP Film Writer

CANNES, France (AP) — In Leos Carax's "Annette," an enchantingly demented rock opera, Adam Driver sings in some very strange places. On a motorcycle. At sea. In the middle of lovemaking.

Since its premiere last month at the Cannes Film Festival, "Annette" has predictably caused a stir. As you might suspect, opinions tend to differ on absurdist-yet-sincere 140-minute musicals of elaborate melodrama scored by Sparks (the pop duo Ron and Russell Mael) and co-starring a glowing baby (the titular Annette) rendered in the form of a puppet.

And yet, if anyone can agree on anything in "Annette," it's that Driver is really good in it. Extraordinary, even. For an actor prone to launching himself fully into the visions of filmmakers, it's maybe a new pinnacle of rigorous commitment. In even the most out-there parts of "Annette," Driver is ferociously dedicated and intensely physical. He goes all in. And those more unusual places for song, like in the middle of oral sex? Another new experience.

"It feels very singular," says Driver. "Like: I won't be doing this again" — and then he chuckles — "most likely." Driver spoke in an interview on a hotel balcony overlooking the Mediterranean during his brief stay in Cannes. Immediately after sharing a cigarette with Carax during the standing ovation for "Annette" at its premiere, he flew out to return to shooting "White Noise" in Ohio with Noah Baumbach. His head, Driver said, was fully immersed in "White Noise."

But "Annette" is something different for even the eclectic Driver. He signed on to it seven years ago after Carax, the French filmmaker of the blissfully bonkers "Holy Motors," contacted him having only seen him in "Girls."

"I've been talking about this movie for seven years," Driver says. "So there is also a sense of relief just hav-



Adam Driver poses for photographers at the photo call for the film "Annette" at the 74th international film festival, Cannes, southern France, on July 6, 2021.

ing someone watching it, somewhere. I'm relieved it will be out."

"Annette," which is in theaters now and debuts Aug. 20 on Amazon Prime. In it, Driver plays a famous stand-up comedian named Henry McHenry who performs a sinister, physical show dubbed "The Ape of God," while clad in a boxing robe. (Driver modeled his movements on a gorilla's.) His wife is Ann Defrasnoux (Marion Cotillard), an equally famous opera singer. Each night, Henry "kills" his audience while Ann saves them by dying at the end of each performance.

The mix of Carax's and Sparks' sensibilities are hard to describe, but everything in "Annette" is heightened, surreal, self-aware — except for the performances. "Even if it feels surreal, I can't play surreal," says Driver.

Ron Mael told reporters in Cannes that discussions with Carax began very

early on about the movie's tone. "It's kind of a shared belief that the characters should be sincere in what they're saying, that they shouldn't be distanced," said Mael, "That's really important and separate from so many other kinds of modern musicals."

The movie opens with the Maels themselves leading Carax and company in a march out of a recording studio while singing "So May We Start?" But from that point on, the performances have no hint of a wink. When the romance turns dark after the birth of the marionette Annette — gifted right away with a beautiful singing voice — the movie slides into tragedy and, maybe, into the heart of artistic creation.

Justin Chang for The Los Angeles Times wrote that the movie "belongs to Driver," and that he "has rarely appeared more imposing in his physicality, more bottomless in his capacity

for rage and deceit." Eric Kohn, for IndieWire, called Driver "a deranged force of nature."

For the first time, Driver is a producer. He stayed with "Annette," even though it meant waiting seven years — the length of his entire "Star Wars" run.

"When somebody like that wants you to do a movie, it's like how do you not? It's so obvious. I only try to do things that are no-brainers in my mind," says Driver. "I haven't always followed my own advice.

But it has to be so obvious. Do you want to work with the Coen brothers? Yes, obviously. Or Scorsese where it's going to be in Japan? Sure, of course. So this was easy to stay committed to."

Driver was particularly enamored with Carax's celebrated 2012 fantasy "Holy Motors," which like "Annette" is about imagination and the nature of performance.

"In all his movies, it seems like his actors have such freedom — which turned out to be true," Driver says. "He's also good at balancing that with incredible choreography. He likes to cherry pick details of impulses and then suddenly he's choreographing a dance. When I watch his movies, they seem like freedom."

Driver tends to be more at ease talking about the directors he works with than his own acting. About Carax he describes the director's notes as soft spoken, "almost whispers." After a scene, Driver would sometimes realize Carax had acted it alongside him, and was now out of breath. But as for what Driver clings to personally in "Annette"?

"I don't know myself. I totally get lost in the minutia of filmmaking, the technical aspects of it," he says. "What it amounts to or what it means or what the movie is for me, I don't analyze often."

Driver sings almost the entire time in "Annette," a performance that follows on the footsteps of his Oscar-nominated turn in Baumbach's "Marriage Story," which reached a stunning climax with Driver's character singing "Being Alive" from Steven Sondheim's "Company." Before that, Driver's musical debut was more tongue-in-cheek, as part of the recording session of "Please Mr. Kennedy" in the Coen brothers' "Inside Llewyn Davis."

"I don't have any plans nor not necessarily no interest to sing again in movies. I always love it in movies," says Driver. "People do sing in life — I mean, burst into the song. But we don't communicate through song. In a way, it feels more appropriate. There is something more vulnerable about it." But Driver, who was a Marine before dedicating himself to acting, is aware of the more bonkers dimensions of "Annette." How has he been describing it to friends and family?

He laughs. "It's just your run-of-the-mill fantasy musical about a baby." □

Associated Press

Walker's welcome: Kemba comes home to play for the Knicks

By **BRIAN MAHONEY**
AP Basketball Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The "Welcome to New York" signs decorating the outside of Madison Square Garden and hanging behind him were nice, though unnecessary.

Kemba Walker needs no introduction around here.

He's a New York native who was already playing at Madison Square Garden in high school and made a memorable buzzer-beater during a historic Big East tournament run while playing for Connecticut.

Now he gets to see what he can do while playing there for the New York Knicks.

"It's going to be better," Walker said. "Ten times better."

The Knicks held a news conference Tuesday to announce the additions of Walker and Evan Fournier, his teammate last season with the Boston Celtics who was acquired in a sign-and-trade deal.

Fournier, like many around the NBA, called Madison Square Garden his favorite arena. But few players —

Knicks or otherwise — can match Walker's history in the building.

The highlight video montage that played before the start of the news conference included Walker's step-back jumper to beat Pittsburgh in the quarterfinals of the 2011 Big East tourney, when he led the Huskies to a stunning stretch of five wins in five days.

"That was just a special, special run," Walker said.

They followed it by winning the NCAA championship, with Walker the Most Outstanding Player. He went on to play eight seasons with the Charlotte Hornets and thought there was a chance he would sign with the Knicks in 2019 as a free agent before instead going to Boston.

Now, a decade after he lit up the arena, the arena was lit up with his picture.

"I think everything is perfect. Everything," Walker said. "Perfect timing."

It happened after the Celtics traded him to Oklahoma City in June. Walker agreed to a buyout so he could sign elsewhere, though said the



New York Knicks guard Iman Shumpert (21) defends Charlotte Hornets' Kemba Walker in the fourth quarter of the Knicks' 91-87 victory in an NBA basketball game at Madison Square Garden in New York, in this Monday, Jan. 9, 2012, file photo.

Associated Press

Knicks were his only choice. At 31, the 6-foot-1 Walker may no longer be the same player who has av-

eraged 19.9 points and been selected to four All-Star Games. He struggled with knee pain in each of

the past two postseasons, though said Tuesday he feels great now.

No matter what, his signing was popular in New York, where the Knicks have long searched for a point guard and may have finally found one right in town. Walker was besieged by messages from friends, old coaches and beyond following the news that he'd be a Knick. "I planned on telling everybody I only get four tickets," Walker joked to a small crowd at MSG that included his mother and sister.

Fournier agreed to his four-year deal worth about \$78 million while in Tokyo, where he was France's leading scorer in the Olympics. The French beat the U.S. in their opening game and lost to them in the final, matching their best finish with a silver medal.

The swingman averaged 17.1 points last season for Orlando and Boston and should provide scoring punch for a Knicks team that defended well under Tom Thibodeau but was searching for more offense in the offseason. □

Jakobsen earns Vuelta stage win 1 year after horrific crash

MOLINA DE ARAGÓN, Spain (AP) — About a year ago, Fabio Jakobsen was on a hospital bed fighting for his life in an induced coma after a horrific crash at the Tour of Poland.

On Tuesday, he was a stage winner again at a Grand Tour race, taking the lead in the final stretch of the closing sprint to win the fourth stage of the Spanish Vuelta.

"It's a dream come true," said the Dutchman from team Deceuninck-Quick Step. "After the crash, it was a long way back. But I'm happy I'm here."

Rein Taaramae held on at the top of the overall standings despite crashing with a couple of kilometers (miles) to go.

It was Jakobsen's biggest victory since he needed reconstructive facial surgery after being pushed into the roadside barriers by Dylan

Groenewegen in the final sprint of the first stage at the Tour of Poland. Groenewegen later received a nine-month suspension by the International Cycling Union.

"It took a lot of time and a lot of efforts by a lot of people," Jakobsen said. "This is also their victory. I'm talking about the doctors, the surgeons, the medical staff in Poland until my second family here, the team, and everybody in between. It's also my family's victory because they are the reason why I am here."

Jakobsen passed Arnaud Demare only a few meters (feet) from the finish line at the end of the 163.9-kilometer (101.8-mile) flat stage into Molina de Aragón.

"It was a hectic bunch sprint," he said. "I just had a little bit more in the legs at the end. I'm happy I could pass him. I wasn't sure I

could do it but I'm glad I did it for my teammates because this is also their victory." Taaramae crashed with about two kilometers (1.2 miles) to go as the peloton went around a wide turn. The Estonian appeared to hurt his shoulder but was able to get up quickly and rejoin the bunch, maintaining a 25-second overall lead over Kenny Elissonde. "I don't really know how I crashed. I went down but I'm alright. I don't have many injuries. I'm a little bit burned," Taaramae said. "If there's no wind tomorrow, I probably can keep the jersey, and the day after tomorrow, it's a small hill at the finish. I think I have the legs to hang on if I position myself well at the bottom of the climb. I think I can keep it two more stages and then the Alicante stage will be a big battle, and it will probably be too hard."



Deceuninck - Quick's Fabio Jakobsen from the Netherlands, center, wins the fourth stage between Burgo de Osma and Molina de Aragon, 163,9 kilometers of La Vuelta cycling race, northern Spain, Tuesday, Aug. 17, 2021.

Associated Press

Two-time Vuelta champion Primož Roglič was third overall, 30 seconds off the lead. Roglič won the first stage but lost the lead when Taaramae made a dominant final climb in the race's first mountain stage on Monday.

Riders will face another flat

stage that should favor the sprinters again on Wednesday, a 184.4-kilometer (114.6-mile) route that will finish in Albacete in southeastern Spain.

This year's three-week Grand Tour race will end in Santiago Compostela instead of Madrid. □

Tim Tebow's comeback story ends with Jaguars cutting him

By **MARK LONG**

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. (AP)

— Tim Tebow's comeback and NFL career are over.

The Jacksonville Jaguars waived Tebow on Tuesday, parting with the 2007 Heisman Trophy winner who switched from quarterback to tight end in hopes of rejuvenating his pro football career.

"We knew that was an uphill battle for Tim," said coach Urban Meyer, who recruited Tebow to nearby Florida. "Players loved him, locker room loved him, but it was the right thing (to do)."

Tebow's blocking ranged from awkward to awful in Jacksonville's preseason opener against Cleveland on his 34th birthday. The polarizing player went viral for two botched attempts on the opening drive of the third quarter Saturday night, the second one more egregious than the first.

"He has a bunch of good plays but can't have a bad play at that position," said Meyer, who spoke to Tebow about the roster decision Monday night and again Tuesday morning.

Tebow also failed to record a catch against the Browns and got no snaps on special teams. Meyer said Tebow's play lacked consistency, especially in tackling. And if Tebow were going to make Jacksonville's 53-man roster, he needed to be a special teams contributor.

Meyer said he expects this



Jacksonville Jaguars' Tim Tebow prepares to catch a short pass from quarterback Gardner Minshew II during an NFL football training camp in Jacksonville, Fla., Tuesday, Aug. 3, 2021.

Associated Press

to be the end of Tebow's playing career.

"I would guess it is," Meyer said. "We didn't get that deep with it. Obviously he's his own man, elite warrior, elite competitor. But he's also 34 years old."

Tebow was shielded from the media circus that followed him during other NFL stops and never publicly addressed his return after nearly six years away from the game. The Jacksonville native responded on Twitter and thanked his hometown team for a chance.

"Thankful for the highs and even the lows, the opportunities, and the setbacks," Tebow wrote. "I've never wanted to make decisions

out of fear of failure and I'm grateful for the chance to have pursued a dream."

Tebow opened training camp as Jacksonville's fourth- or fifth-string tight end after switching positions this year. He was trying to return to the NFL after spending the previous five years in the New York Mets' organization. He hit .223 with 18 home runs and 107 RBIs while never making it to the big leagues.

He asked Meyer for a tryout after retiring from baseball in January. Meyer obliged and ended up giving him a one-year contract worth \$920,000, the minimum for a player with three accrued NFL seasons. The low-

risk deal included no guaranteed money, so Tebow had to make the team to earn a dime.

And that was always the uncertain part. Jacksonville entered camp with three tight ends essentially locked into roster spots: run-blocking specialist Chris Manhertz, fellow veteran James O'Shaughnessy and fifth-round draft pick Luke Farrell.

Former and current NFL players criticized Meyer for giving Tebow a roster spot and pointed out a number of more deserving tight ends on the street. But many of Tebow's teammates welcomed him with open arms.

"It's still so cool," said quarterback Gardner Minshew, who wears No. 15 because he grew up idolizing Tebow.

"I mean, every time I throw to him, I just smile. That's like my favorite thing. But it's like, it's unbelievable. You hear bigger-than-life stories about the dude and it's all real. It's unbelievable. Truly bigger-than-life-type person, so it's been really awesome to be around him."

Tebow flashed early during organized team activities and rarely dropped balls thrown his way. But once camp began and players donned full pads, Tebow faded. It quickly became clear that Tebow was less of a pass-catching option than Tyler Davis, a sixth-round selection in 2020, and second-year pro Ben Ellefson.

His blocking woes and lack of experience on special teams made Meyer's decision a relatively easy one.

"It's special teams," Meyer said. "This whole roster management is really critical as we journey here through the next two weeks. Two of the special teams phases are tackling, and he's never tackled. ... We expect to be very good on special teams. Tight end and tailback, if you can't contribute on special teams, that's a tough go."

Tebow helped Meyer and the Gators win two national championships while becoming one of the most recognizable athletes in college sports.

Denver selected Tebow with the 25th overall pick in the first round in 2010. He led the Broncos to a playoff victory in his second season, but his long windup and inaccuracy led to a short NFL career. He spent time with the Broncos, the New York Jets, New England and Philadelphia.

His last meaningful game came with the Jets in 2012. The Eagles cut him following training camp in 2015, with then-coach Chip Kelly saying Tebow wasn't good enough to be Philly's No. 3 QB.

NOTES: Veteran C Brandon Linder has strained patella tendinitis and Meyer said "we're going to sit him for a little bit, but he's fine." ... CB Tre Herndon has a sprained knee ligament and is considered "week to week." □



Atlanta Falcons quarterback Feleipe Franks (15) runs the ball out of the pocket against the Tennessee Titans during the second half of a preseason NFL football game, Friday, Aug. 13, 2021, in Atlanta.

Associated Press

Falcons first NFL team to have 100% of players vaccinated

FLOWERY BRANCH, Ga. (AP)

— The Atlanta Falcons have become the first NFL team to have all of its players complete COVID-19 vaccinations.

The Falcons opened training camp with more than 90% of their players vaccinated, and they confirmed Monday they reached 100%. The NFL announced the Falcons were the first team to reach 100%.

Atlanta becomes the first

team able to have all its players not wear masks around the facility and eat and work out together.

Meanwhile, defensive end John Cominsky has been placed in the concussion protocol and will miss this week's preseason game at Miami.

Cominsky was injured in the third quarter of Friday night's 23-3 loss to the Tennessee Titans.

The third-year player

played in 13 games, including two starts, and had 28 tackles and one sack last season.

The Falcons have released linebacker George Obinna and offensive lineman Bryce Hargrove and waived-injured wide receiver J'Mon Moore. The team also has waived defensive lineman John Atkins, cornerback Marcus Murphy and offensive lineman William Sweet. □